

VOLUNTEER HARFORD'S COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Meet Valerie Nozea, volunteer for the Mid-Atlantic Asthma Foundation. Valerie serves as a volunteer Executive Director for the Foundation and has held her post since July 2007. In this role she wears a variety of hats to manage the Foundation's operational direction; however, it's her personal connection to asthma that drives her commitment to help families cope with challenges of this disease. Valerie's passion for asthma education and awareness has led to her incredible dedication to the Foundation.



Mid-Atlantic Asthma Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004. It was founded to educate and support families living with asthma. A chronic and potentially debilitating disease, asthma affects over 550,000 adults and over 190,000 children in Maryland. In Harford County asthma is one of the leading causes for childhood hospitalizations. People are needlessly dying from this disease and, most recently, Harford County Public Schools lost its Superintendent of Schools to asthma. Asthma continues to affect our community; MAF strives to make a difference in the community through its various outreach activities. MAF has piloted a home intervention program which will help families identify the environmental factors contributing to their child's asthma episodes and to help them gain asthma control. This is a tremendous achievement for the Foundation since this program is a first for the county. In addition, MAF conducts asthma workshops and provides resources and scholarships for children living with asthma to attend a specialty asthma camp each summer.

Valerie has had asthma since childhood and recalls experiences when she couldn't perform in school because of difficulty breathing. "During those times, I thought it was because I was out of shape and needed to exercise more," states Valerie. Unfortunately, for many families there are misconceptions regarding asthma which often leads to missed school days and poor school performance. Valerie's childhood struggles with asthma and her passion for positively impacting lung disease has led to a diverse career in respiratory health. "Helping families breathe well in order to live well is my commitment and my Foundation's purpose," states Valerie.

Valerie Nozea's strong leadership and her ability to connect with individuals and community organizations, will enable MAF to meet the needs of the growing population of families who need resources and support to gain control of their asthma, and enable them to lead healthy lives now and in the future.

**To find out how you can volunteer for
"Mid-Atlantic Asthma Foundation"
text "volunteer" to 70701
www.volunteerharford.org**



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
David R. Craig
Harford County Executive
Mary F. Chance
Director, Dept. of Community Services

**For more volunteer
opportunities across
Harford County call or visit
Volunteer Harford online.**



www.volunteerharford.org
410-638-4444